Northwick Lodge Harrow on the Hill.
Monday 16th Sept 1963

Dearest René

Sorry for this enclosed illegible & indecipherable meander ~~[illegible]~~, written on Saturday about nothing. ~~[illegible]~~ I nearly tore it up & started afresh but thought I'd send it having written it. It's really only to send you and Joan my love & to say I think of you a lot. & hope all goes well in the new & different home. It's a *bloody nuisance* being so far from you. But we seem all to get divided up. When Harman ~~[illegible]~~ gives up his flat in London & lives ~~[illegible]~~ permanently in Hertfordshire. I don't suppose I shall *ever* see him.

I'm much the same in health. Still under this ~~[illegible]~~ regimen of pills, capsules, tablets etc. It's been just for the last two days lovely weather — the only summer-like days we've had ~~since~~ practically since last summer. I hope to God the coming winter is not as arctic as the last. Nothing much to complain of, except this *endless tiredness* & inertia, & everything taking about twelve times as long to do as it used to.

Sonia Brownell came to see me the other day. I was glad to see her again after many years. ~~[illegible]~~ A new international periodical is in preparation & they wanted something of mine in it. & she came to ask what I had, so ~~[illegible]~~ I found *The Dream of Private Clitus* which I did on the radio a few years back. & it's never been printed before. & she was very pleased with it.

The Yanks are doing a paper-back of *In Parenthesis* next month — Faber are too, theirs *was* coming out in this last-

It is is not *really* a matter of the ease of coming ~~[illegible]~~ over to see you. It is this complicated business of not going *anywhere*, which, though the psychiatric treatment of some years back, *worked wonders*, *almost a miracle*, considering the state I was in, they've *never* ~~[illegible]~~ seemed to get me over that business. I've tried hard to explain this to dear Valerie who is or was always wanting me to go for a visit to North Wales, but it's hard for *anybody* to understand who has not experienced the bloody thing. Perhaps, even now, someday, I shall get free of it. I can tell you it's an appalling nuisance, to put it mildly.

spring or early summer, but it seems it won't be out till December/ so the Yanks have beaten them to it. Is your trans of *Roland* still available for Dents do you reckon? I was telling Sonia how good it was — she'd never heard of it, because it was monstrously unpublicized when Fabers published it (or distributed it) in 1937 — I could never understand that. It's so terribly good. I've been reading it again lately — or fairly lately.

I'm a bit worried about the new printing of the plates of *the Ancient Mariner* — they have not got the depth of the 1929 ones. However, they may get them better. I don't know. It's going to be a very expensive edtn. £15 – 15 – 0 a copy & only 300 for U.S.A. & 100 here.

I'm so glad you liked the last two ~~paintings~~ water-colour drawings I've done. I wish there were 22 instead of only 2. But that's about the pace now.

Well, very, very much love to Joan, Jeanne, Siân or however she is called, at all * . God bless you.

With much love from
Dai

P.S.
I hope this letter & the one to Rosalind will arrive by the same post. I feel awful for not answering her letter before. Sometime I'll do a drawing of the horses I said I would, but I can't at present. Now, more letters to America & elsewhere, all delayed.

D

* remarked a jolly nice bit in old Joyce a bit back with ref. to Swift. ('Did you anywhere, kennel, on your gullible's travels, or on your rural troubadouring, happen to stumble upon a certain gay young nobleman whimpering to the name of Low Swine who always addresses woman out of one corner of his mouth, lives on loans and is furtive free yours of age' I remembered it & could not find it. But my Boston friend Jack Sweeney, wrote to a friend of his (a Joyce fan) in Dublin & he found the passage for me — it's p. 173 *Finnegans Wake*

A rather disturbing thing, I suppose mixed up with this floating neurosis of mine is that I write down quite the wrong word & don't notice it — so I have to go over everything I write a dozen times to see if it's right — this has got worse — I leave out words like 'not' which is pretty disastrous & write 'and' or 'an' & 'who' for 'which' or anything so if this or the enclosed letter is full of hiatuses & lacunae or worse, you must understand that that's the reason. — added of course to my inability to spell.

14 September, 1963
letter originally
enclosed with

16 September, 1963?

14 Sept 6~~4~~3

Sept 64

Northwick Lodge
Harrow on the Hill Middlesex
England.
Sat. 14th Sept.
EXALTATIO S. XRYCIS
SOL IN LIBRA*

*This may be wrong now because of alterations in the Calendar, I'm going by the Sarum Missal, 15th Century. but I hope it's OK because statera = Libra & so Constellation Libra = Sign of the Cross.

Any mention in your district of Ardmore the name of an Episcopal See ~~[illegible]~~ founded in the 6th Cent. the site is given as a little south & east of Cloyne.

It sounds vaguely Netherlandish to me I don't know why.

My Dearest René

Thank you so much for your letter. I'm sorry I've not written sooner but had a lot to do & am now trying to get round to answering neglected letters.

No news really. I think about you a very great lot. I wonder if Betty Speaight (so many vowels in Betty's name I never know which comes first. I wonder what sort of a name it is — I mean Germanic,* Latin-Romance, Celtic, it wouldn't half be hard to spell in Welsh, I suppose it would be Ysbeit or possibly Ysbait – no, Ysbeit.) only I hear from Douglas Clev. that Betty S. was going to Áth Cliath to do some acting in the Abbey Theatre & had an ~~[illegible]~~ idea of going down to see you in Munster.

I'm so glad you all like the place – it sounds heavenly. I bet you've had plenty to do – it must have been appalling. & I expect you are still at it.

I've only just finished that Monograph for the Douglas C. & Louis Cowan new edition of the Ancient Mariner. It got terribly long in the end, about fifty sheets of foolscap, all told about 13,000 words, wandering all over the place. God knows if it has any point. But once I got down to it all kind of stuff came in that I wanted to say & it took me three months to do – quite crazy. Anyway its being typed now, Douglas came to see me a few days ago & took it away. & I've seen the last of it, at least for a bit, until it comes back in typescript.

Now I'm ~~trying~~ to cope with all the innumerable letters I've left unanswered while concentrating on the bloody thing. Just written three long letters to three chaps in America which ought to have been written weeks back. Not seen Harman since we met at that meal just

*You see in Welsh that's the way, generally, of orthographically expressing ~~that~~ particular 's' sound. Hence words like ysgol direct from Lat. schola; or ysgrythur from ~~[illegible]~~ scriptura, ~~[illegible]~~ ysbryd, Lat. spiritus. On the other hand when the second letter of the Latin word is a vowel e.g. signum, securus, solis, the Welsh derivative does start with an 's', swyn, (jolly odd for signum!) segur, sol. For some reason which I don't understand when 'i' follows 's', at least in Modern Welsh, the 's' becomes like our 'sh' thus Siân, Joan, ~~[illegible]~~ Siôn, John. ([illegible]) ~~are~~ pronounced 'she-ahn' and 'shone'. Charles is wonderfully changed in appearance to approximate to the English sound, ~~[illegible]~~ its Siarl, so Charlemagne ~~[illegible]~~ becomes Siarlymaen & James Siams. But what Joan, or rather the French form of it, Jeanne, ? (wasn't it sometimes spelt with an 'h' in Mediaeval French, Jehanne, or something like that?) – I'm thinking of that daughter of King John who married Llywelyn the Great. She was called Joan, but in the Welsh Chronicle she is called Siwân pronounced 'See-wahn' (not shee-wahn) & I wondered if the 'w' was an attempt to render the Norman-French sound. ~~[illegible]~~

before your departure. Spoke to Mick R. on 'phone, he 'phoned me to Cowes, having just returned from his odyssey over the Atlantic. It's a bit complicated about the use of 'Celtic' which you mention in your letter. It has ~~[illegible]~~ disadvantages — some chaps think it should be reserved for linguistics only, but that won't really do, because there is a 'Celtic' res, language or no. There is something recognizably different historically & prehistorically between the 'Celts' & the 'Teutons' & the Teutons' subsequent history, the involvement of the ~~Celtic Ruling~~ Celtic rulers in Britain who gave the Celtic language to the previous inhabitants during the 1st Millennium B.C. who were then ~~[illegible]~~ in turn involved in the four centuries of Roman rule ~~making~~ made them in all sorts of ways different from the chaps in Ireland, but on the other hand, it's clear, that at the end of the Roman Occupation with ~~[illegible]~~ resurgence of Celticity & the development of the Celtic Monastic movement (which, after all, sprung out of the Romano-British Xtian Church) ~~[illegible]~~ Later Patrick took it to Ireland — it was entirely Roman in its doctrine, but it certainly developed a slant that can only be described as 'Celtic' I should have thought. It is evident that ~~[illegible]~~ there was a real enough unity of some sort in all ~~[illegible]~~ those thalassic connections which linked in the 6th & 7th centuries ~~[illegible]~~ Ireland, Wales, Brittany, then South-Western Scotland, — & to the north, by Columba going from Northern Ireland to found Iona & then later chaps from Iona (Aidan) converting the new Angle Kingdom of Northumbria &c. What is becoming more & more evident in that after the ordinary 'Dover–Calais' etc connection was altogether impossible owing to the Anglo-Saxon conquest of most of the 'Lowland zone' of Britain, there remained, or started up, a direct sea-route connection between ~~[illegible]~~ Gaul ~~and~~ & the 'British' or 'Welsh' whatever you like ~~[illegible]~~ to call 'em via the Bristol Channel* & Ireland & southern Scotland. & of course David & Patrick & Illtud & lots more chaps like Dubricius ~~Dyfrig~~ (Dyfrig) all appear to have gone to the Islands of Lerins off the Mediterranean France coast.* to study. & Lerins had ~~connected~~ a tradition of connection with those chaps in the Egyptian Thebaid — so I

* They seem to have gone by sea from South Wales or Ireland to the Mouths of the ~~Seine~~ Loire* & overland to Provence — otherwise they'd have had to go round Spain & thro' the Pillars of Hercules, which is not suggested.

*Liger in Roman times, which was also the river-mouth [illegible] took the tin from Cornwall in pre-history.

* There's a sort of joke that has a kind of truth in it: chaps say Patrick was a Welshman & David an Irishman. Because all that southern part of Wales had been early occupied by Irish (Scotti) from the Wexford area in late Roman times & certainly Patrick was a 'Welshman' in the sense of a Romano-Briton — he may have come from the Severn Estuary or from the North, but certainly the Saxons ~~would~~ would have called him a Wealh.

* incidentally it's now thought that about the same period ~~[illegible]~~ when chaps went from South West Britain & ~~that~~ occupied Brittany during the Anglo Saxon invasions ~~&~~ others may have ~~Britain~~ ~~[illegible]~~ gone to that northern bit of Spain — Cape Finisterre. ~~[illegible]~~ I don't know what the known evidence is for this. But I do remember Mabel Burns telling me that the folk-music of that part of N. W. Spain is very like Scottish or Irish music & dances.

* There was a very large Celtic monastic community at Llanilltud Fawr near Cardiff (founded by St Illtud in the 5th Century), a place now called Llantwit Major. Not a vestige remains because they built entirely of wood & wattle. But in Norman times it still existed in a vague, degenerated sort of way. They, of course, finished it off, & expropriated the funds & made them over to the Abbey of Tewkesbury. They were a lot of bastards I must say.

* The evidence is appallingly scanty but in recent years they have excavated a chieftain's stronghold near Cardiff & others elsewhere in Wales & found shards & fragments of glass & ceramics from Merovingian Gaul, by sea.

suppose a lot of that particular asceticism & a certain 'orientalism'* — differing from the Gallo-Roman & especially the specifically Roman thing came into the 'Celtic Church' that way. But whereas, pretty soon, the 'British' or 'Welsh' chaps would have no truck at all with the Anglo-Saxons, the Irish-Celtic thing spread further & further all over the show — as you know: ~~Gaul~~ to Luxeuil near ~~Dijon & Swiss~~ Dijon & the Swiss border & , in Northern Italy — Bobbio & so on. The Welsh continued to call themselves 'Britons' till quite late. It was only when they were cut off wholly from the British kingdom of Strathclyde and Cumberland etc & a bit later from Devon & Cornwall that they began to call themselves the Cymry — in older Celtic Combroges, meaning, they say, 'chaps of a like sort.' And it was only in Wales that they continued to maintain a line/s or lines of rulers of their own. Then the Norman and Angevin thing slowly deprived them of their precarious independence & the Plantagenet Conquest put an end to that too — as far as separate feudatory state went, the last two Llywelyns ~~all but~~ achieved it. However, Edward's conquest did not, apparently, in itself change Welsh life. It was really the Tudors ~~that~~ finally merged them so far as the total governmental & administrative business was concerned with England. But there remained the language & a rural folk tradition & that was all. It's a bit of a bloody miracle how anything has remained. For the Tudor intention*, was total assimilation & it was also the will of a lot of Welshmen, small sorts but especially the top boys that such would happen. But it hasn't — not quite, not yet. So the history of Wales vis-à-vis England is ~~[illegible]~~ quite different from that of Ireland — or of Scotland. But, before the Angevin Conquest of Ireland in the 12th Cent. Welsh princes & leaders 'on the run' used to go to Ireland. Indeed Gruffydd ap Cynan prince of North Wales (1055 — 1137) was, I think, born in Ireland, his mother was half Irish half ~~[illegible]~~ Norse, — he was a hell of a tough, collected Norse ships ~~[illegible]~~ in the Shetlands & got Scandinavian mercenaries, & returned to gain back his father's kingdom in Wales — jailed at first, was in a Norman dungeon in ~~[illegible]~~ Chester for about 10 years? but escaped & eventually controlled the country. But the point is ~~that~~ he had a great effect upon Welsh metric — ~~[illegible]~~ harp & voice, because he brought with ~~[illegible]~~ him fr

In fact he had to flee to Dublin three times altogether. Once I think because his Norse mercenaries couldn't get the loot they expected from the Welsh so they forced Gruffydd to come ~~[illegible]~~ back in their ships to the Scandinavian settlement in Dublin.

I wonder where the Celtic, specially Irish, ~~[illegible]~~ church, got what they calls the 'Laws of the Sabbath' — in the sense that they were just as sabbatarian as any Welsh or Scottish Nonconformist to-day. As far as I know that never prevailed in Gaul & certainly not in Italy.

Whereas (generally speaking) the old Welsh aristocracy has long since become utterly Anglicized. Same with the Established Church (on the whole). There was no Welshman appointed to a Welsh bishopric for some time in the 17th Cent. until the second half of the 19th. Cf Gladstone.

* In the Act of Parliament under Eliz. I. authorizing in 1563 the trans. of the Bible into Welsh it was stipulated that an English copy be set side by side the Welsh ones in the Churches so that chaps by comparing the two would the sooner come to an understanding of the English tongue'. From the point of view of 'realpolitik' it was the one mistake they made. Because when, in, about 1730, the movement that led to Methodism, began, it was from the Welsh Bible that the illiterate peasant were taught to read & that largely saved the Welsh language.

for it was in Classical Welsh, Bishop Morgan who finished his trans. in 1588 was steeped in the older medieval Welsh poetry & now it is the prose of the Bible. So though their Nonconformists cut them off utterly from their Catholic past it kept alive a passionate devotion to the language. And ~~at~~ at about the same time in the 18th Century all sorts of chaps began studying the older native deposits & some groups in Wales & London to discuss the things of the Welsh past that paved the way to the ~~[illegible]~~ 19th Century Nationalist movement. It was all under the shadow of ~~[illegible]~~ Protestantism & Whiggery but it was Welsh.

Ireland musicians & bards that are said to have influenced, or re-vivifying, the practice of those arts in Wales. I don't at all know the exact truth of this* but it is clear there was still in ~~the~~ 11th & early 12th. century a considerable common 'Celtic' culture between Ireland & Wales — different to that of Engl.-France. Though of course the whole bloody cycle of 'European Romance' literature stems via Angevin Anglo French artistry from Celtic myth & legend.

Lord, René I'm sorry for all this stuff, but you know in any case. That's how I meander.

Jolly interesting that the people call a field a 'lawn' round Shanagarry, that's like Elizabethan & Caroline English is'nt it — [illegible] Or Milton — "The Shepherds on the Lawn / Or ere the point of dawn / Sate simply chatting in a rustic row." It is the same word as llan and Jerry Lant and our land they say, from some Indo-European landa & lando.

That spade ~~too~~, I didn't know old Bickle(?) used one, but I knew that that form without the cross bar at the top of haft was the primitive type. The pointed shape of the blade seems better, but the cross-bar seems a great improvement. I suppose they don't go as far as still using 'breast-ploughs' — which must have been an awful sweat — a chap just pushed them with a bar against which he pressed his thorax, I think. I know my old master, Archibald Standish Hartrick, made a lovely water-colour of a man using one in Gloucestershire in the first decade of this century. I remember his showing it to me when I was at Camberwell ~~with~~ under dear old Solly & the immortal Coles, god rest them. Remember had among Eric was with that 'woof, woof' we pinned up somewhere in your bed room at Pigotts!

I'm awfully sorry for not answering a sweet letter Rosalind sent me weeks ago — I'm sending her a letter by the same post as this one. Heard from Valerie the other day. They are alright, but very busy with stuff to do with farm & quarry. I wish to God I could see her. I'll write again soon. Sorry for this pointless historical essay. The St Dominic statue looks fine standing on a sort of box next the little round table on the right of the fire-place.

much love to you René & Joan from Dai.

*But it was an established belief ~~before~~ the 16th Cent.

There is a History of Gruffydd ap Cynan written soon after his time. It sounds flowery in English. It was written in Latin & translated into Welsh.

'Born to failure' as Canon Gray said.

Saunders Lewis, to my great pleasure came suddenly in the door as I was eating lunch a week or two back. & he had just come back from a 3 weeks holiday with his wife (who is Irish) in Ireland & he said how unspoiled it still was, as yet. As he knows all about these Celtic languages, or anyway about Welsh for he lectured in Welsh Literature at Cardiff Univ. I asked him if in hearing Gaelic anything was recognizable, because the roots are, of course, the same, but he said that the accentuation being so totally different, it was impossible to guess the connection — you can see it, of course, when written, or at least in many words but not at all, when spoken — the difference is too great.

also, of course, the identities occur in words that have become obsolete, more or less, in Welsh, thus bun (pronounced bin) is a Welsh word for ~~[illegible]~~ girl, but geneth is the word used. **But** bun is the same word as bean, woman, in Irish thus bean-sidhe — 'banshee' (woman fairy) & so on. and the Welsh pen head is cenn (I think) in Gaelic.

síd actually means a mound, doesn't it? — but obviously it was in these mounds or tumuli that the fairy-people were thought to live.

and Welsh cad, a battle, cath in Gaelic ~~or~~ Erse or Goidelic whatever you like to call it.